

REMARKS

Claims 2-7, 12-25, and 28-32 remain in this application, claims 1, 8-11, 26-27, and 33-40 are canceled, and new claim 41 is added. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

The provisional election of the species of invention identified by the Examiner as species "I" is hereby affirmed. New claim 41, the only independent claim now in this application, is generic to each of the species originally identified by the Examiner, and thus reads on species "I." Examination of all claims in this application is in order.

The objection to the drawings set forth on pages 3-4 of the Office Action is overcome by the drawing amendments set forth above.

The informalities in the claims referred to by the Examiner on pages 5-6 of the Office Action are eliminated by the claim amendments appearing above. It is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now in this application are in proper form and fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

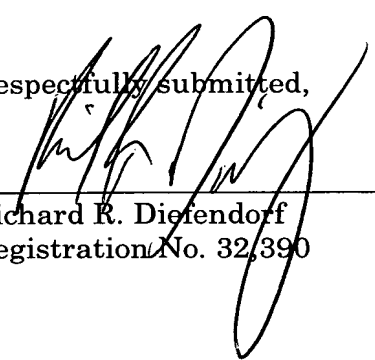
On pages 7-9 of the Office Action, certain claims were rejected as being anticipated by either Swiss patent 444,414 to Silvestri or German document 31 45 825 to Mauri. Reconsideration of each of the rejections set forth on pages 7-9 of the Office Action is requested. New claim 41 includes limitations which are neither disclosed nor suggested by either of the documents relied on by the Examiner. Claim 41, for example, reflects that the adjoining vehicle body skin

parts referred to are provided with inwardly bent, projecting flanges oriented in the same direction in a common connection area. This feature distinguishes the releasable connection forming the subject matter of this application from the disclosures relied on by the Examiner. As a result of a construction as defined by claim 41, a releasable connection of two adjoining components is provided in the area of flanges oriented in the same direction. In each of the prior art disclosures relied on by the Examiner, by contrast, the connection disclosed is provided between components which are oriented approximately at a right angle with respect to one another. In any event, it is respectfully submitted that neither of the documents relied on by the Examiner discloses or suggests a releasable connection as specified which comprises at least one base plate which is held in position as recited and a receiving device which is fastened as recited, and in which the base plate extends, the receiving device is configured, a head section of the at least one projecting pin can be guided, and a rotatable slotted sleeve reaches in regions behind a circular-arc-shaped head section area as claim 41 particularly defines. It is respectfully submitted that claim new claim 41 is patentable as a result. The rest of the claims remaining in this application depend on claim 41 and are patentable as well.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

May 10, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



Richard R. Diefendorf
Registration No. 32,390

CROWELL & MORING LLP
Intellectual Property Group
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844
RRD:rd

DRAWING AMENDMENTS

Please amend the drawings by replacing the sheets including Figures 2-4 as originally filed with the replacement sheets including those figures which are appended to this Reply. Figures 2 and 4 are amended on the replacement sheets, with amended Figure 2 showing an "eccentric" surface 40 and with amended Figure 4 incorporating a bracket and including modified illustrations of pins 11 and 11a.